

Vermont State Board of Education Monthly Report – November 2007

From the Chair

At its meeting on November 20, 2007, the State Board of Education addressed the following topics:

Board's Desired State Public Engagement

Process: Educators and Principals – Board members met on the morning of Tuesday, November 20, with approximately 20 educators from around the state to continue its public engagement process regarding the future of education in Vermont. This discussion was kicked off by the October release of *The Future of Education in Vermont*, a ***transformation document** recently adopted by the State Board of Education. Facilitated by Department of Education staff members, participants were split into groups and asked to respond to three questions:

- *As you envision a transformed learning environment for the students of Vermont **what current practices** should be included in a transformed education system that would best serve the needs of all students?*
- *As you envision a transformed learning environment for the students of Vermont **what new practices** should be included?*
- *What questions does the document, **A Step toward the Transformation of Education in Vermont**, raise for you as **an educator? A principal?***

Following the morning educator discussion, Board members met during the afternoon with approximately 20 principals to continue the public engagement process.

Discussion summaries can be seen at <http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/mainboard.html>.

*The transformation document will serve as the means for conversation with constituent groups on the topic. Additional conversations with a broad range of constituent groups will be scheduled at subsequent Board meetings. In addition, plans are underway for the Commissioner to hold regional conversations with students and principals. To view the transformation document, go to http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/board/future_of_education/future_of_education.pdf.

Pre K Rules

Act 62 of the 2007 General Assembly directed the Departments of Education and Children and Families to engage in a joint rulemaking process for the purpose of regulating and clarifying the process by which pre-kindergarten services shall, if authorized by the electorate, be provided to 3 and 4-year-old students, and to 5-year-old students who are not eligible for, or enrolled in, kindergarten. Following an extensive rules development process and discussion, the State Board approved the initiation of the rulemaking process at its November 20th meeting. To view the proposed rules, go to: http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/board/packet_07_1120/item_N.pdf

From the Board

Kathy Larsen attended the November 15 Statewide School Calendar meeting in Springfield.

Tom James attended a Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators meeting in Randolph and the Statewide School Calendar meeting in Essex Junction, both on November 13.

From the Commissioner

CCSSO Annual Policy Forum – The Commissioner reported on the recent national meeting he attended in Columbus, OH. A key topic of the meeting was how best to prepare students for success in the 21st Century. Much of the discussion was consistent with the transformation of education work in which the Board and department are currently engaged.

From the Department

Statewide School Year Calendar – Act 31 of the 2007 General Assembly requires the development of a statewide student attendance calendar to be recommended to the State Board by January 30, 2008 and acted upon by the Board by March 31, 2008. The Statewide School Calendar committee developed three sample calendars for discussion at public meetings across the state. During October and November, the committee held five public meetings and one meeting via Vermont Interactive Television (VIT). Detailed Information is available on the Department of Education's Web site: http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/dept/school_calendar.html. Students, parents,

educators, school board members, community members, businesses, legislators and school administrators are encouraged to send comments to the following e-mail address:
SchCal09@state.vt.us.

Required elements in the 2009-2010 calendar include:

- The first three days of school for students will be the Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday prior to Labor Day.
- Five common in-service education days, one of which will be organized by the Department of Education and conducted at regional sites throughout the state.
- 175 common student attendance days. A majority of students in each grade must be in attendance or participating in a school-sponsored academic activity for a minimum of 5.5 hours, including recess and lunch, for a day to constitute one full student attendance day.
- Imposition of a financial penalty on districts failing to provide the 5.5 hours of classes daily to students in all grade levels on each of the 175 common student attendance days
- May include a provision that there be a sole vacation period between January 2nd and April 30th to occur during the week of town meeting.
- Provisions for the State Board of Education to grant a waiver for the ensuing year to a group of school districts that requests, before May 1 of any year, to deviate from the statewide calendar due to unique regional circumstances.

Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators (VSBPE) – The VSBPE has established its meeting schedule for 2007-08. The meetings dates follow:

- December 10, 2007 – Vermont College (Dewey Lounge), Montpelier
- January 22, 2008 – VTC (Morey Lounge) Randolph Center
- February 13, 2008 – VTC (Morey Lounge) Randolph Center
- March 12, 2008 – VTC (Old Dorm Lounge), Randolph Center
- April 9, 2008 – VTC (Morey Lounge) Randolph Center
- May 13, 2008 - Vermont College (Dewey Lounge), Montpelier

For additional information, contact Rebecca Otis (Rebecca.Otis@state.vt.us) or see the VSBPE's information at http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_prostandards/vsbpe/vsbpe.html.

Upcoming Events

For information on upcoming Department-sponsored events, see <http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/dept/calendar.html>.

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For more information on the Vermont State Board of Education, visit <http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/mainboard.html>.

To view approved minutes of SBE meetings: <http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/board/schedule.html#approved>

To view the State Board of Education's Monthly Reports: http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/board/schedule.html#monthly_reports

